

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 526

Recognizing the 70th anniversary of John Mercer Langston Golf Course.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 10, 2009

Ms. NORTON (for herself and Mr. CLAY) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 70th anniversary of John Mercer Langston
Golf Course.

Whereas the site for the historic John Mercer Langston Golf Course was selected in 1929, following repeated demands from African-Americans who were excluded from all but one of the District's public courses, the Lincoln Memorial;

Whereas construction did not begin until the mid 1930s, and in 1938, African-American women from the Wake Robin Golf Club pressed for desegregation of the District of Columbia's public courses by drafting and introducing a petition to Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes;

Whereas the historic Langston Golf Course was officially opened in 1939, as a segregated golf facility for African-Americans;

Whereas Langston Golf Course was named for John Mercer Langston, a renowned Howard University educator, prominent political figure, and the first African-American Congressman from Virginia, elected in 1888;

Whereas the Langston Golf Course is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and has been the home course of both the Royal Golf Club and the Wake Robin Golf Club, the Nation's first clubs for African-American men and women respectively;

Whereas over its 70-year existence, the Langston Golf Course has attracted many famous African-American golfers, like Lee Elder, Ted Rhodes, Calvin Peete, and Jim Thorpe, who all made regular and annual stops on the circuit of African-American professionals when they were unable to play regularly on the racially restricted PGA Tour;

Whereas other notable visitors include heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis, Hall of Fame baseball player Maury Wills, Senators baseball player Chuck Hinton, Washington Redskins players Darrell Green and Brian Mitchell, the Dallas Cowboys, and Alvin Harper, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Gale Norton, Missouri Congressman Lacy Clay, South Carolina Congressman James Clyburn, Wisconsin Senator Russ Feingold, actor and professor, Al Freeman, Jr., and the musical superstars the O'Jays have all enjoyed the Langston course;

Whereas without Government resources, the Langston Golf Course has developed an invaluable relationship with youth and DC and regional residents;

Whereas in 2002, a partnership was formed with Howard University to open the Interpretive Education Center,

and this program was integrated into the Langston community schools in 2003;

Whereas for more than 15 years, three junior golf programs have made the Langston Golf Course their home, Masons Army, Langston Junior Boys and Girls, and the First Tee, DC;

Whereas juniors from these programs are nationally and internationally known as The Jimmy Garvin All-Stars and are required to utilize the Education Center in order to learn golf and use the facilities;

Whereas these programs operate year round offering educational and golf instruction;

Whereas the Langston Golf Course is known as the home of the internationally renowned Capital City Open Pro-Am Tournament and the Jimmy Garvin Legacy Scholarship Classic;

Whereas the Langston Golf Course, Rock Creek Golf Course, and East Potomac Golf Course are owned by the National Park Service, and each has a long history of service to the general public as an integral part of the Nation's capital, including services to local and regional residents, visitors, and tourists;

Whereas the National Park Service has continuously struggled to manage and maintain the three golf courses because concession restrictions do not generate sufficient revenue to provide affordable recreation while properly maintaining and making the capital investments required for golf courses today;

Whereas concession restrictions will continue to cause deterioration, disrepair, and limited public use, reducing the

quality of play and jeopardizing the historic preservation of the courses;

Whereas these courses together constitute an undervalued and underused asset that can be maintained and modernized as affordable facilities for use by the general public if an appropriate lease arrangement is utilized that encourages private investment in keeping with the existing Federal procedures;

Whereas the capital improvement necessary to maintain and modernize the courses and to prevent their deterioration is not possible using a traditional concession contract; and

Whereas a long-term lease for all three courses together, designed outside of the constraints of concession law, will encourage private investment in these courses, improve and modernize them, ensure affordable play, and preserve the historic nature of the courses: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives recog-
 2 nizes the 70th anniversary of John Mercer Langston Golf
 3 Course.

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